

Message Text

CONFIDENTIAL

PAGE 01 STATE 025008
ORIGIN NODS-00

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 /001 R

DRAFTED BY:SECRETARY ARMY
APPROVED BY:EUR:JEGOODBY
OSD/ISA:JSIENNA
PM/ISP:COL MATHISON
S/S-O:SRPVALERGA
EUR/RPM:WTSHINN JR
EUR/CE:ELAUDERDALE

-----097049 310605Z /10

O 310407Z JAN 78 ZFF4
FM SECSTATE WASHDC
TO USMISSION USNATO IMMEDIATE
AMEMBASSY BONN IMMEDIATE
AMEMBASSY LONDON IMMEDIATE
USDELMC BRUSSELS IMMEDIATE

C O N F I D E N T I A L STATE 025008

NODIS
EYES ONLY FOR AMBASSADORS AND USDELMC

E.O. 11652: ADS -- DECLAS FEB 1, 1978

TAGS: NATO, MPOL

SUBJECT: TANK GUN

1. FOLLOWING IS THE TEXT OF SECRETARY OF THE ARMY'S
PUBLIC ANNOUNCEMENT OF DECISION ON TANK GUN. ANNOUNCE-
MENT IS SCHEDULED FOR JAN 31 AT 11:00 A.M. (WASHINGTON
TIME). USNATO SHOULD AT THAT TIME PASS TEXT TO SYG LUNS
AND PERMREPS, USDELMC SHOULD SIMULTANEOUSLY PASS TEXT TO
CHAIRMAN MC, AND AMBASSADORS STOESSEL AND BREWSTER SHOULD
PASS TO MOD'S LEBER AND MULLEY AT SAME TIME THEY DELIVER
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SEC DEF'S LETTERS TRANSMITTED SEPTTEL. COMPLETE SCHEDULE
OF ANNOUNCEMENT SCENARIO IS BEING SENT SEPTTEL.

BEGIN TEXT:

SECRETARY OF THE ARMY CLIFFORD L. ALEXANDER, JR., WITH
THE CONCURRENCE OF SECRETARY OF DEFENSE HAROLD BROWN,

TODAY RECOMMENDED TO THE CONGRESS THAT THE FEDERAL REPUBLIC OF GERMANY'S 120MM SMOOTHBORE GUN SYSTEM DESIGN BEGIN U.S. DEVELOPMENT AND TESTING TO ADAPT IT TO PRODUCTION AS THE FUTURE MAIN ARMAMENT SYSTEM FOR THE XM-1 TANK. THIS SELECTION WILL PROVIDE THE UNITED STATES WITH INCREASED CAPABILITY AGAINST LONG-TERM ARMOR THREATS AS WELL AS ENHANCE THE

PROSPECTS FOR INTEROPERABILITY OF THE NEXT GENERATION OF TANK GUNS WITHIN NATO.

THE DATE OF INTRODUCTION OF THE GERMAN 120MM SMOOTHBORE GUN INTO XM-1 PRODUCTION IS DEPENDENT ON SUCCESSFUL COMPLETION OF ESSENTIAL DEVELOPMENT AND TEST EFFORTS. THESE WILL ENSURE THAT THIS 120MM GUN MEETS U.S. ARMY REQUIREMENTS FOR INTERNAL TURRET VOLUME. IN ADDITION, CERTAIN DESIGN MODIFICATIONS WILL BE REQUIRED TO REDUCE THE COST OF PRODUCING THE GUN SYSTEM IN THIS COUNTRY AND TO TAKE ADVANTAGE OF CERTAIN AMMUNITION ADVANCES RECENTLY DEMONSTRATED. IT IS EXPECTED THAT QUESTIONS WILL BE RESOLVED BY LATE 1981. WITH SUCCESSFUL COMPLETION OF DEVELOPMENT EFFORTS THE ARMY EXPECTS XM-1 PRODUCTION WITH THE 120MM GUN COULD BE INITIATED IN THE 1984 PERIOD.

SINCE 1973 THE U.S. ARMY HAS ENGAGED IN A COOPERATIVE
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EFFORT WITH THE UNITED KINGDOM AND THE FEDERAL REPUBLIC OF GERMANY TO SEEK A COMMON, OPTIMAL TANK MAIN ARMAMENT SYSTEM FOR NATO FORCES. IN THE MOST RECENT EVALUATIONS, THE CANDIDATE SYSTEMS WERE THE BRITISH RIFLED BORE AND GERMAN SMOOTHBORE 120MM SYSTEMS, AND THE U.S. STANDARD 105MM GUN WITH IMPROVED AMMUNITION. THESE EFFORTS HAVE RESULTED IN MAJOR ADVANCES IN BOTH GUN AND AMMUNITION TECHNOLOGY FOR ALL COUNTRIES INVOLVED. SELECTION OF THE GERMAN GUN SYSTEM CULMINATES A SERIES OF EVALUATIONS. ALTHOUGH THE BRITISH SYSTEM WAS NOT SELECTED, THE ARMY PLANS TO WORK OUT A MUTUALLY AGREEABLE ARRANGEMENT TO CONTINUE TO WORK WITH THE BRITISH ON AMMUNITION TECHNOLOGY.

THE EVALUATIONS DEMONSTRATED AGAIN THE ADEQUACY OF A 105MM-EQUIPPED XM-1 FOR THE NEAR-TERM THREAT. BECAUSE OF THE NEED TO FIELD THE XM-1 TANK AS SOON AS POSSIBLE, THE ARMY WILL PRODUCE XM-1 TANKS WITH THE 105MM GUN INITIALLY, WHILE BEGINNING A COOPERATIVE DEVELOPMENT AND TEST PROGRAM WITH GERMANY FOR THE INSTALLATION OF 120MM GUNS ON XM-1S AS SOON AS PRACTICABLE.

AS REQUIRED BY THE DOD APPROPRIATIONS ACT, 1978, THE
ARMY'S RECOMMENDATION FOR PARALLEL DEVELOPMENT OF THE
FRG 120MM GUN SYSTEM AND INTEGRATION OF THAT SYSTEM
INTO THE XM-1 TANK WAS PRESENTED TO THE CONGRESS THIS
MORNING. END TEXT.

2. THIS IS A JOINT STATE/DEFENSE MESSAGE. VANCE

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INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 /001 R

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DRAFTED BY:S/S-O:SGOLDSMITH

APPROVED BY:S/S-O:SGOLDSMITH

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O 311045Z JAN 78 ZFF4

FM SECSTATE WASHDC

TO WHITE HOUSE IMMEDIATE

C O N F I D E N T I A L STATE 025008

NODIS

FOR BRZEZINSKI ONLY

FOL STATE 025008 SENT ACTION USNATO BONN LONDON BRUSSELS
JAN 31, 1978 REPEATED TO YOU QUOTE

C O N F I D E N T I A L STATE 025008

NODIS

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2. THIS IS A JOINT STATE/DEFENSE MESSAGE. VANCE
UNQUOTE VANCE

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Message Attributes

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Capture Date: 01 jan 1994
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Draft Date: 31 jan 1978
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Secure: LOCK1
Status: NATIVE
Subject: TANK GUN
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